

**CLAIMS:**

We claim:

1. A pan protector formed from textile sheet material comprising:

opposed front and rear panels, each of the panels being defined by an edge portion, the front and rear panels being connected together along a substantial length of the edge portion of each panel by a stitched seam to form a pocket therein;

a pan receiving opening in the formed pocket for insertion and removal of a pan in the pocket; and

a handle receiving opening at an end of the pocket, whereby a handle of the pan is inserted therethrough, and whereby, once the handle of the pan has been substantially inserted through the handle receiving opening, the pan is then inserted into the pocket through the pan receiving opening so as to completely cover the pan.

2. The pan protector of claim 1, wherein the pan receiving opening in the rear panel is a transverse opening.

3. The pan protector of claim 1, wherein the pocket is adapted to accommodate varying sizes of pans therein.

4. The pan protector of claim 3, wherein the front and rear panels are made of stretchable

material, whereby the pocket formed when the panels are connected together can be stretched so as to accommodate the varying sizes of pans placed therein.

5. The pan protector of claim 1, wherein the stitched seam is a continuous stitched seam.

6. The pan protector of claim 1, wherein each panel has an outer layer and an inner layer.

7. A pan protector formed from textile sheet material comprising:

a front panel, the front panel being defined by a first edge portion;

a rear panel defined by a second edge portion, the rear panel further comprising opposed first and second overlapping plies of fabric;

wherein the front and the rear panel each have an outer layer and an inner layer and are connected together along a substantial length of the first and second edge portions by a stitch seam to form a pocket therebetween, the front and rear panels being made of stretchable material, whereby the pocket formed when the panels are connected together can be stretched so as to accommodate varying sizes of pans placed therein;

a transverse pan receiving opening in the rear panel for insertion and removal of a pan in the pocket, the pan receiving opening being positioned where the first and second plies of fabric overlap; and

a handle receiving opening at an end of the pocket, whereby a handle of the pan may be inserted therethrough, and whereby, once the handle of the pan has been substantially inserted through the handle receiving opening, a first end of the pan may then be inserted into a first end of the pocket through the pan receiving opening, and an opposed second end of the pan is then inserted into a second opposed end of the pocket, whereby the first ply of the overlapped fabric is then everted over the second ply of fabric to cover the opening to the pocket, so as to completely cover and protect the pan therein.

8. The pan protector of claim 1, wherein at least one of the panels is made of heat resistant materials.

9. The pan protector of claim 7, wherein the inner layer is made of heat resistant materials.
10. The pan protector of claim 1, wherein the panels are made of cotton, polyester, wool or a polyester blend.
11. The pan protector of claim 7, wherein the outer layer comprises a decorative pattern.
12. The pan protector of claim 7, wherein the edge portions of each panel are connected together along the substantial length of the edge portions by adhesion.
13. The pan protector of claim 7, wherein a continuous stitched seam is used to connect together the front and rear panel of the textile material along a full length of the edge portions of the front and rear panels so as to form the pocket therebetween.
14. The pan protector of claim 13, wherein the handle receiving opening is provided on the front or rear panel, wherein, when the front and rear panel are fully connected together along the edge portions thereof, a handle of the pan can be substantially inserted therethrough to assist in facilitating the pan being placed and accommodated in the pocket.
15. The pan protector of claim 1, wherein a piece of textile material may be connected to an

upper surface of an underlying pan protector, the connection being sewn along a substantial length of edge portions of the piece of textile material, so as to define a further pan receiving pocket on the upper surface of the pan protector.

16. A method of making a pan protector to protect a pan placed therein, the pan protector being formed from opposed front and rear panels of textile sheet material, comprising the steps of:

connecting together the front and rear panels of the textile sheet material along a substantial length of edge portions of the front and rear panels with a stitched seam to form a pocket therebetween;

providing a pan receiving opening in the formed pocket for insertion and removal of a pan in the pocket; and

providing a handle receiving opening at an end of the pocket, whereby a handle of the pan can be inserted therethrough, and whereby, once the handle of the pan has been substantially inserted through the handle receiving opening, the pan can then be inserted into the pocket through the pan receiving opening so as to completely cover and protect the pan placed therein.

17. The method of claim 16, wherein a continuous stitched seam is used to connect together the front and rear panel of the textile sheet material along a full length of the edge portions of the front and rear panels so as to form the pocket therebetween.

18. The method of claim 17, wherein the handle receiving opening is provided on the front or rear panel wherein, when the front and rear panel are fully connected together along the edge portions thereof, a handle of the pan can be substantially inserted therethrough when the pan is to be placed and accommodated in the pocket.